

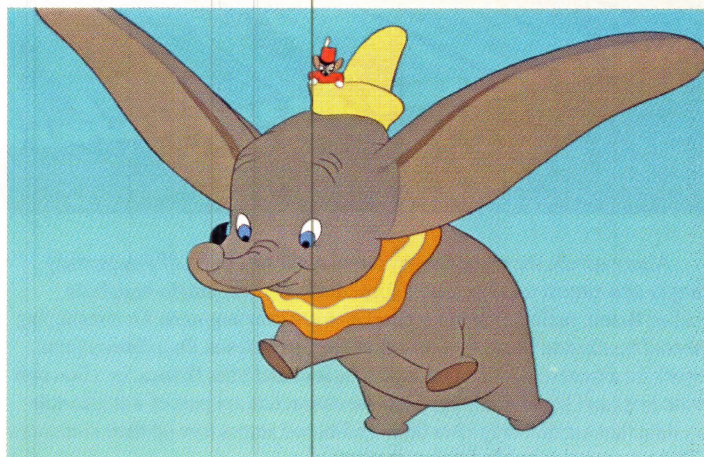
Synonymous with the very best in animation and live-action family entertainment, Disney's is a story of dogged persistence, unbridled creativity and sheer artistry, as one man (and his mouse) changed an entire industry...

EMPIRE PRESENTS  
A COMPLETE HISTORY OF

Disney

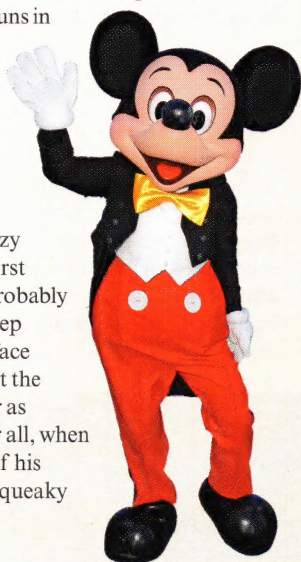


Left: Disney with pal Mickey. Right: Buzz and Woody in *Toy Story*. Far right: the triumphant *Lion King*. Below: surprise hit *Dumbo*. Bottom: Mickey himself.



ONCE UPON A TIME, 82 YEARS AGO, A CROWD OF NEW YORKERS LINED UP AT A BROADWAY CINEMA TO SEE A NEW-FANGLED FILM "TALKIE". THE DATE WAS NOVEMBER 18, 1928, A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AFTER AL JOLSON BROKE THE CINEMA SOUND-barrier in *The Jazz Singer*. The setting was the city's 79th Street Theatre (later renamed The Colony) and the film was an action-crime picture called *Gang War*, which promised "Machine guns in action! Bedlam! Bomb explosions!" How tastes have changed...

In the audience was a nervous young man, a natty, sharp-faced fellow. He was a natural-born salesman and go-getter, with a knack for selling investors on strange ideas about moving pictures. He was also the archetypal small-time American with big, crazy dreams, and his name was Walt Disney. The first thing you'd notice about young Walt would probably be his jaunty moustache; a moustache he'd keep through decades of changing fashions as his face became better known, though never — even at the height of his global prestige — anywhere near as famous as the moving pictures he made. After all, when people hear Disney's name, they don't think of his moustache. They're more likely to imagine a squeaky voice and a pair of circular ears. ▶



DISNEY'S CHARACTERS  
SEEP INTO THE GLOBAL  
CONSCIOUSNESS.



## BADDIE TO THE BONE

A rogues' gallery of Disney's greatest villains...

Disney animation is seen as sweetness and light. Yet many youngsters' first encounter with evil is through a Disney villain. The oldest continuing Disney character is a bad guy, rotund bully Pete, whose first known appearance is in 1925's silent *Alice Solves The Puzzle*. You're likelier to remember Pete as the Ghost Of Christmas Yet To Come in 1983's *Mickey's Christmas Carol*, or as a regular in the TV 'toon *Goof Troop*.

Disney villains often echo contemporary actors. *Snow White's* evil witch was inspired by Lionel Barrymore, who later played the odious Mr Potter in *It's A Wonderful Life*. Fifty years on, *The Little Mermaid's* Ursula was modelled on drag-queen Divine.

Villains can be straightforwardly scary, such as *Snow White's* witch or Judge Claude Frollo in *The Hunchback Of Notre Dame*. But there are comic baddies too — Cruella De Vil (above), Madam Mim, James Woods's Hades in *Hercules*. The urbane tiger Shere Khan in *The Jungle Book* is a hoot for grown-ups but terrifying for Mowgli-sized kids. Captain Hook in *Peter Pan* is especially intriguing, buffoonish or menacing by turns. Animator Frank Thomas said Walt gave him Hook as he delighted in thinking, "I wonder what the hell Thomas is going to do when he gets this?"

Of course, the scariest Disney villain is the one we don't see — the unseen huntsman in *Bambi*...





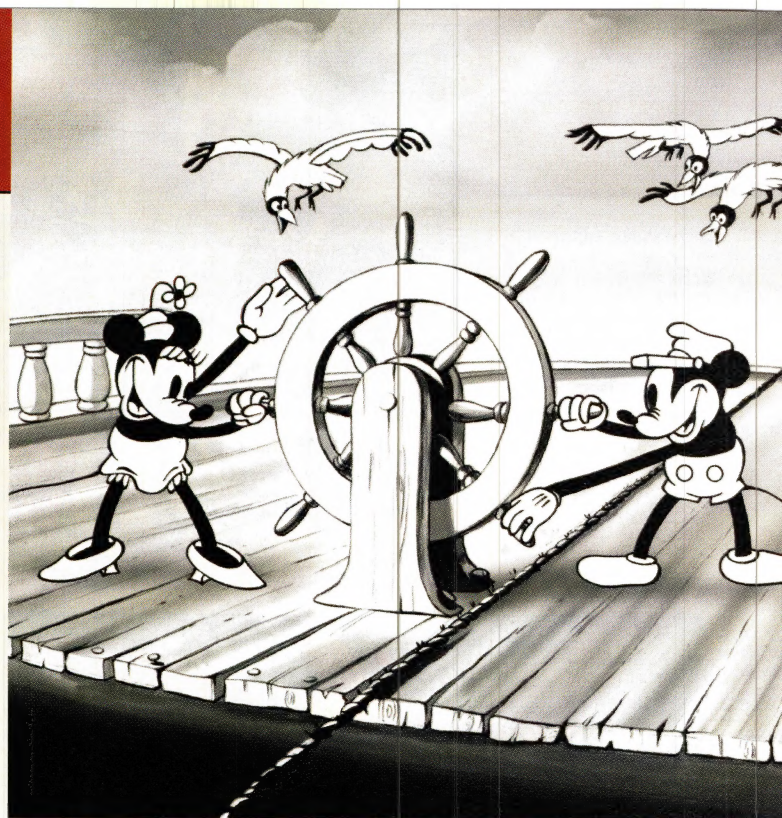
## THE TUNES OF THE 'TOONS

*Disney has a song back catalogue that is second to none...*

Such is the strength of the Disney song catalogue, that even when at times you're only vaguely aware of the movie, you'll be able to hum a few bars of its biggest tunes.

Disney has always believed that songs must serve the story, not just be there to get the feet tapping. This is probably best embodied by the work of the Sherman Brothers, Robert and Richard, who became the first pairing to work regularly on the company's feature animation, starting with *The Sword In The Stone*. In 1965, the pair won two Oscars for *Mary Poppins*, but their masterpiece is surely *The Jungle Book* (above), a film in which every tune is not only hummable, but gives a perfect portrait of each character without requiring a single thought.

The Shermans have become the model for Disney songsmiths, who tend to collaborate in pairs, bar the occasional pop star, eg Phil Collins for *Tarzan*. Elton John and Tim Rice took *The Lion King* to Oscar success, and young fans will be most familiar with the songs of Alan Menken and the late Howard Ashman. Their work on *Beauty And The Beast*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Aladdin* wonderfully continued the elegant, emotional, fun style that had helped forge the early classics, their work breathing new life into Disney animation in the late '80s. As Menken said of his friend on his death, "He gave a mermaid her voice and a beast his soul." And without those they were just ink and paint.



Alternatively, the name Disney might make one think of a supremely angry and almost totally unintelligible duck. Or a fat jungle-bum bear called Baloo, performing a jazz number with an orang-utan. Or a sashaying showdog, singing about the scoundrel Tramp she loves. Or a clumsy faun stuck on a tree trunk. Or a chic lady mouse called Miss Bianca, or a lion cub who just can't wait to be king. All these characters are part of a studio star-system that's lasted long after flesh-and-blood actors tore up their contracts. They are, unmistakably, Disney characters.

For the past eight decades, Disney's studio has been in the business of creating stars from pencil and paint (or pixels and vectors) that seep into the global consciousness with the Proustian impact of a plate of ratatouille on a cranky food critic. They cast us back to childhood, to our first experiences of the big screen. The old cinephile cliché used to be that we all remembered where we were when Bambi's mother was shot. For younger viewers, the shared experience may be of laughing at Aladdin's Genie, or thrilling as Buzz and Woody rocket to infinity and beyond. Or, ahem, of wetting one's cinema seat at the sight of Madam Mim in *The Sword In The Stone*.

**B**ACK IN 1928, WALT'S CHARACTERS WERE PART OF THE CARTOON CROWD. EVEN FEWER PEOPLE KNEW HIS FACE, EXCEPT FOR THE HANDFUL OF ANIMATORS HE EMPLOYED IN CALIFORNIA. EVEN SO, WALT HID HIMSELF AWAY AT THE BACK OF THE stalls, sitting with an intrigued young musician called Carl Stalling, who had already worked with Walt on a number of shorts and would prove a key collaborator in the future. The pair had met eight years earlier in Kansas City, when Walt worked at an advertising company, making small animations with jointed cut-out figures. But this new cartoon was something immeasurably more ambitious.

## DISNEY TIMELINE



**1937**  
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS



**1940**  
PINOCCHIO



**1941**  
DUMBO



**1942**  
BAMBI



**1950**  
CINDERELLA





Left: 1928's *Steamboat Willie* – the birth of a legend.  
Above: Bank Of America Vice Pres. Bernard Giannini discussing a bank loan with Walt Disney and his brother Roy. Right: *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* (1937), a true classic of animation.

The curtain rises. The title card reads “STEAMBOAT WILLIE”, a short diversion before the gangster gunplay. Seconds later, the American public gets its first sight of a cheery animated mouse, spinning the wheel of the title steamboat as he whistles and shakes his rodent butt. Walt, sitting anonymously in the dark, hears giggles and snickers from an audience who'd come for bombs and bedlam.

The mouse was a new character, but not that new. Mice and other big-eared rodents had been popular in silent cartoons for years, because their ears made them stand out in simple animation. Walt had created one such critter himself, Oswald The Lucky Rabbit. What made *Steamboat Willie* special was that it was the first fully synchronised sound cartoon, thanks to the technical wizardry of a young animator named Wilfred Jackson. The sounds included Mickey's whistles, the clacking of the steering wheel and the musical piping of the steamboat — for, right from this beginning, Disney was using music to drive the action.

Disney biographies (including two recent major books, Michael Barrier's *The Animated Man* and Neal Gabler's *Walt Disney: The Biography*) trace Walt's story long before *Steamboat Willie*. He was born in Chicago, but many people point to his boyhood on the Missouri prairies that fuelled his imagination. Perhaps this was the barnyard home of his cartoon critters. It certainly seems the foundation of the apple-pie America he would seek to idolise and globalise as Disneyland's Main Street. Alternatively, you can start with Walt's first forays into animation, working with tiny teams of artists, sometimes starving for his craft.

Twenty-first century cartoons poke fun at fairytales and give them a



topical spin, but so did several of Disney's earliest films, the so-called Laugh-O-Grams. Then in 1923 he made a film called *Alice's Wonderland*. It starts with a live-action little girl entering Disney's Kansas City studio and meeting a beaming (and moustacheless!) Walt, already avuncular at 22-years-old. Walt shows her cartoon characters dancing, scrapping and bouncing round on the artists' drawing-boards. A cartoon mouse pokes a live-action cat.

Weeks after *Alice's Wonderland* was finished, the Kansas City studio went bankrupt and Walt went west, to Los Angeles. There he employed new staff, though some colleagues followed him from Kansas City, including Ubbe Iwerks, known to history as Ub Iwerks. The studio churned out Alice films by the dozen, and in 1926 it moved to Hyperion Avenue, where it would stay for perhaps the greatest years of its history. (It relocated to Burbank in 1939.)

Eventually, the Alice films gave way to the proto-Mickey character Oswald The Lucky Rabbit. But in 1928, Walt experienced a traumatic betrayal from his distributors. Irked at having to negotiate with the increasingly confident filmmaker, they poached Walt's employees from him. They also took Oswald (owned by Universal), leaving Walt with only a handful of remaining artists (including Iwerks) and a hastily conceived new character. Walt's wife Lillian, whom he'd married in 1925, remembered, “Walt and Roy [Walt's elder brother, Roy O. Disney] were so broke they would go to the restaurant and order one dinner, splitting the courses between them... I couldn't believe that my husband meant to produce and distribute pictures himself, like the big companies.”

Walt read her the scenario he'd written for *Plane Crazy*, his new film about a mouse called Mortimer. (It was produced before *Steamboat Willie*, >

## AFTER THREE LITTLE PIGS, NO LONGER WERE CARTOONS A DIVERSION.



1950  
TREASURE ISLAND



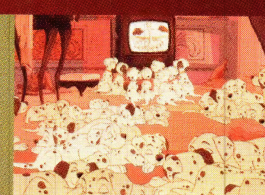
1953  
PETER PAN



1955  
THE LADY AND THE  
TRAMP

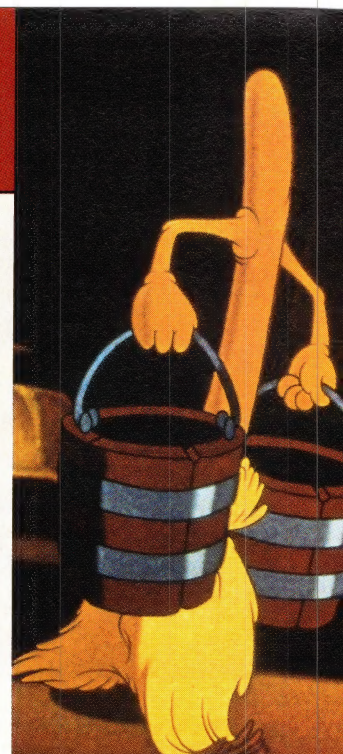


1959  
SLEEPING BEAUTY



1961  
ONE HUNDRED AND  
ONE DALMATIANS





but released later.) By now, Lillian said, the magnitude of what Walt was attempting left her shell-shocked. "Suddenly all my personal anguish focused on one violent objection... 'Mortimer is a horrible name for a mouse!' I exclaimed. Walt argued — he can be very persuasive — but I stood firm." Finally, to placate his stubborn wife, Walt came up with a substitute: Mickey Mouse.

**SO THE STORY GOES. OTHER PEOPLE, INCLUDING WALT HIMSELF, RECALLED MICKEY'S NAMING IN DIFFERENT WAYS AT DIFFERENT TIMES. BUT HOWEVER IT HAPPENED, MICKEY WAS BORN OUT OF DESPERATE CIRCUMSTANCES AND WALT'S**

boundless optimism. When the first sound session for *Steamboat Willie* was a let-down, Walt wrote a letter to Roy summing up his attitude to filmmaking. "Why should we let a few little dollars [jeopardise] our chances... We can lick them all with quality."

They could. Walt had to fight for funding and distribution after *Steamboat Willie*, but meanwhile the Mouse attracted grass-roots support across America. As the 1930s dawned, Mickey Mouse clubs sprang up at cinemas. These were children's events where kids recited the Mickey creed ("Mickey Mice do not swear, smoke, cheat or lie!"), played games and watched Mickey Mouse cartoons. The character became a merchandising phenomenon, with Macy's department store selling 11,000 Mickey watches in a day.

But Walt didn't want to depend just on Mickey. Soon after *Steamboat Willie* he began a separate series of cartoons, the Silly Symphonies. The first was 1929's *The Skeleton Dance*, which today looks closer to the work of future Disney employee Tim Burton. Walt's distributor at the

time, Pat Powers, sent him an indignant cable, reading, "They [the cinemas] don't want this. MORE MICE." Walt ignored him. (Both *The Skeleton Dance* and *Steamboat Willie* were drawn by Iwerks, who left Disney in 1930, but later returned to handle effects in such live-action Disney films as 1961's *The Parent Trap*, where he cloned actress Hayley Mills as twin sisters.)

Three years on, Walt decided to convert the 29th Silly Symphony, *Flowers And Trees*, from black and white into Technicolor, a tremendously risky move in Depression-era America. His brother Roy, now Walt's tireless financier and voice of common sense, was aghast. But *Flowers And Trees* opened to huge acclaim and won Walt the first of his 26 Oscars. After the release, Roy wrote to the vice-president of United Artists, which was now distributing Disney's cartoons. "I realise Walt and I do not run our business on a strictly 'business' basis," he wrote wryly.

Thriving in the Depression, Walt produced its anthem: *Who's Afraid Of The Big Bad Wolf?*, sung in 1933's *Three Little Pigs*. "It bursts out at you in almost every film theatre," a frazzled columnist wrote of the song. "The radio hurls it in your direction; try to escape it by adjourning to a speakeasy and some unfortunate alcoholic will sing it at you." But the song became a hit on the back of the Disney characters: the chirpy porcine trio, animated by Dick Lundy and rising studio star Fred Moore, and the drooling, scary-hilarious Wolf, drawn by Norm Ferguson. The film helped establish elastic "squash and stretch" animation as a cartoon standard. More deeply, it reinforced the idea that, as Looney Tunes animator Chuck Jones put it, "It wasn't how

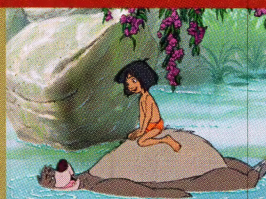
a character looked but how he moved that determined his personality." The possibilities opened up. No longer were cartoons a diversion; *Three Little Pigs* played at cinemas for weeks on end, as live-action films came and went. By autumn 1933, Walt had decided to make an animated feature.

## SNOW WHITE WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL FILM MADE UP TO THAT TIME.

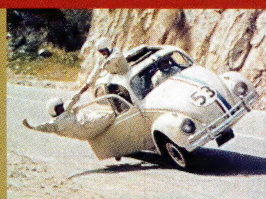
### DISNEY TIMELINE



1964  
MARY POPPINS



1967  
THE JUNGLE BOOK



1968  
THE LOVE BUG



1970  
THE ARISTOCATS



1971  
BEDKNOBS AND BROOMSTICKS





Far left: *Bambi*, responsible for many a child's heartbreak. Left: 1940's initially troubled *Pinocchio*. Above: the audacious *Fantasia*. Right: Cinderella follows her dreams.



ONE EVENING IN THE MID-1930S, WALT GATHERED HIS CRACK ANIMATORS AT THE DISNEY SOUNDSTAGE. BEFORE THE MESMERISED ARTISTS, HE ACTED A FAIRYTALE; ONE MOMENT AN IMPERILLED PRINCESS, THEN A WICKED QUEEN, then a noble prince, and then (and by now, the artists must have realised they had their work cut out for them) a happy dwarf, a grouchy dwarf, a doofus dwarf and so on through the seven. One animator said, "That one performance lasted us three years."

True, Walt had the benefit of great artists, including Disney's Nine Old Men, the renowned core group of animators who created Disney's signature work. Although only in their 30s, the group were so-called after Franklin Roosevelt's nine judges of the US Supreme Court. Walt had drawn his last ▶



## THE HOUSE OF MOUSEPAD

*How computer wizards Pixar have embraced the Disney tradition...*

Not everyone would have seen the potential in a small offshoot of Lucasfilm to change the world of animation – but Disney did. In 1991 they signed a deal which allowed Pixar to create computer-generated animated films that Disney would distribute, in a partnership that has only grown closer since.

Talk to any Pixar employee and they'll rave about Disney's long history of animation, and explain to you how hard they work to keep that tradition going. The same storytelling craft that Walt Disney insisted on is a priority at Pixar; the same animation artistry of the Nine Old Men is carried on by the team at Pixar's Emeryville headquarters. Their latest effort, *Toy Story 3* (above), is a prime example of both: the storytelling is so expertly crafted that every character has a satisfying character arc, without stinting on either theme or subtext, while the animation is as drop-dead gorgeous as you'd expect of a company with such lofty standards. Rare is the studio that can make each sequel in a franchise more enjoyable than the film before it, yet Pixar achieved it with *Toy Story 3*, and in 3D no less.

After a string of hits, most of them unarguably great, Pixar is still going from strength to strength within Disney, gearing up for long-awaited sequels to *Cars* and *Monsters, Inc.*, as well as *Brave*, featuring voicework by Reese Witherspoon and Billy Connolly. We can't wait to see what they come up with next.



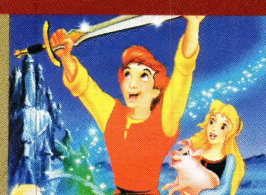
**1973**  
ROBIN HOOD



**1975**  
ONE OF OUR DINOSAURS  
IS MISSING



**1977**  
THE RESCUERS



**1985**  
THE BLACK CAULDRON



**1986**  
THE GREAT MOUSE  
DETECTIVE





## LIVE (ACTION) AND KICKING

*Disney's live-action output gets better and better*

Disney might have made its name through never-bettered animation, but almost from its inception the House Of Mouse has more than held its own in the live-action arena.

Much of Disney's early live-action output was in the educational wildlife arena, but they struck gold in 1964 with *Mary Poppins*, a joyous mix of live-action and animation that launched the career of Julie Andrews. The studio triumphed through the '60s and '70s with kid-friendly fare like the Herbie movies, *Freaky Friday* and *Candleshoe*, establishing important stars like Jodie Foster. But it's in the past decade that Disney has proved a premier live-action player for any era.

It really hit its stride, of course, with the *Pirates Of The Caribbean* franchise. Sneered at by many due to its theme-park ride origins, the first film boasted all the key Disney qualities: great characters, showstopping set-pieces and a complete lack of pretension. With two sequels, the franchise has netted over \$2.6 billion in box-office receipts worldwide.

These days, Disney is balancing excellence in both live-action and cartoon, with the success of tween mega-hit *High School Musical*, *The Chronicles Of Narnia* franchise, *Enchanted* (above) and *Alice In Wonderland* – not to mention a future-release slate that includes the upcoming *Tron: Legacy* as well as the much-anticipated *Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*.



Above: swashbuckling adventure in 1973's *Robin Hood*. Left: Alice explores Wonderland in 1951. Right: an early pirate success with *Treasure Island*. Far right: Oscars galore for *Mary Poppins*.

animation in the 1920s, but now he pored over his employees' work frame by frame in the notorious studio "sweatbox" – a windowless room where pencil tests were screened. There he agonised over the flow of movements and gags, the presentation of the characters' inner lives and thoughts.

Such was the spirit Walt instilled in the 750 artists on *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs*. It was a learning process for Walt too, as he realised he could tone down the gaggery of his cartoons. He once considered making the evil queen's demise funny, putting a comic boom on the soundtrack after she falls off a cliff, anticipating fall-guys like Wile E. Coyote. But in the final animation, the queen's scenes are as scary as any contemporary Hollywood horror.

Here was the darkness that would produce the demonic cavorting of Fantasia's *Night On Bald Mountain*, the boys-into-donkeys transformations in *Pinocchio*, and the crack of a gunshot in *Bambi's* forest. Anyone who calls Disney's cartoon films slush hasn't watched them for a while. Just over nine years after *Steamboat Willie* opened, Disney attended another premiere. This time he had no need to hide in the stalls. The film was *Snow White*, the venue was Hollywood's Cathay Circle Theatre, and the guests included Charlie Chaplin, Marlene Dietrich and Mary Pickford (who'd suggested Disney do a live-action/animated *Snow White* many years earlier).

Animator Ward Kimball was sitting near Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, watching the scene where the dwarves mourn the "dead" Snow White. (The animators struggled to get the exact emotional nuance for the sourpuss Grumpy, who loved Snow White most of all.) Kimball noticed the Hollywood royals were blowing their noses. All around, people were sniffing,

## DISNEY TIMELINE



1989  
THE LITTLE MERMAID



1991  
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



1992  
ALADDIN



1994  
THE LION KING



1998  
MULAN





dabbing their eyes, responding to the grief of cartoon dwarves as if to real people. The Disney of *Steamboat Willie* had been gratified with giggles. Now he'd made Hollywood sob.

*Snow White* was perhaps the most commercially successful film ever made up to that time. Its record was beaten by *Gone With The Wind*, but biographer Michael Barrier points out that many of *Snow White*'s tickets were child-priced. Walt — of course! — reached higher. Even before *Snow White* opened, he'd started developing *Bambi* and *Pinocchio*. By next summer, Walt had decided to expand a Mickey Mouse version of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, made with eminent conductor Leopold Stokowski, into a full-blown "concert feature".

There followed three more years of energised activity, Walt switching attention from one film to another. However, it was the concert feature, eventually called *Fantasia*, which most caught his enthusiasm and led to his notorious remark, "I think this thing will make Beethoven." He was speaking of the composer's *Pastoral Symphony*, interpreted as a carnival of lightning-lobbing gods, bare-breasted centaurettes and bare-bottomed cupids. For musical purists this went too far, but then, *Fantasia* also offered dancing mushrooms and hippos, savage dinosaurs and an army of water-bearing broomsticks.

As if that weren't enough, Walt also insisted on a customised, seat-vibrating, six-track sound system for the film, called Fantasound. Brilliant



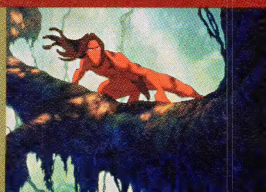
though it was, the system was far too expensive for most cinemas. Disney's distributors RKO (to whom Walt had switched in 1936) insisted the two-hour *Fantasia* be cut for wide release, but the film still lost money. By that time *Pinocchio*, Walt's telling of the story of the puppet who wants to be a real boy, had already failed at the domestic box office. (*Pinocchio* opened in February 1940, with *Fantasia* following in November of that year.)

But at least there was a domestic box office. The lights were going out over warring Europe, and Disney's foreign sales with them. There was a bright moment when *Dumbo*, conceived as a cheap filler film, turned out to be an unforeseen gem. (Michael Barrier credits *Dumbo*'s success to Bill Tytla's animation of the baby elephant, which was partly inspired by the artist's two-year-old son.) *Dumbo* was scheduled for a *Time* magazine cover, cancelled when Japanese planes struck Pearl

Harbor. *Bambi*, the last of Walt's audacious cartoon trio, premiered in wartime London in summer 1942, but again lost money.

Today these films, along with *Snow White*, are often taken as the studio's gold standards, perhaps the standards for animation itself. They remain breathtaking works of art: the monster whale's rampage in *Pinocchio*, *Bambi*'s ice-skating and forest fire, *Dumbo*'s terrifying pink elephants. Critics often rate them higher than *Snow White*, though none gave Walt himself the same satisfaction. "It didn't seem possible to make a better picture than *Snow White*," he said a decade later. ▶

## TO THE END, DISNEY WAS MAKING INSPIRED JUDGMENT CALLS.



**1999**  
TARZAN



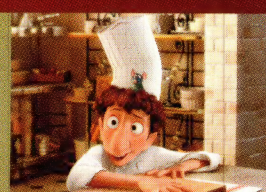
**2000**  
FANTASIA 2000



**2003**  
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:  
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL



**2005**  
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA:  
THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE



**2007**  
RATATOUILLE





Left: '80s fun in *The Fox And The Hound*. Below: back to classic form with *Beauty And The Beast*. Right: runaway success for *Pirates*. Below right: Pixar's *Monsters, Inc.*



THE FOLLOWING YEARS DID NOT QUITE HIT THE SAME HEIGHTS—WALT HIMSELF REFERRED TO THESE FEATURES AS “MASHED POTATOES AND GRAVY”—

though they produced some fascinating films. They included two Donald Duck package features for the South American market, *Saludos Amigos* (1942) and *The Three Caballeros* (1944). In the latter, Walt mixed live-action with animation, using far more sophisticated tools than when he'd made *Alice's Wonderland*, so that Donald could dance beside live-action Brazilian beauties.

Following the war, 1946's *Song Of The South* marked another shift towards live action (only about a third of the film was animated). By summer 1949, when the studio was in production on *Cinderella*, Walt was across the Atlantic in England, overseeing the filming of *Treasure Island* in Bristol. The rollicking film still stands up in the age of *Pirates Of The Caribbean*, thanks to Robert Newton's definitive Long John Silver. (Pirates seem to be good for Disney; look at Captains Jack Sparrow and Hook.) That started the first wave of live-action Disney films. There was the spectacular *20,000 Leagues Under*



*The Sea* (1954), featuring a monster squid, an exploding island and Kirk Douglas doing a double-act with a seal. There was the endearing blarney of *Darby O'Gill And The Little People* (1959), starring a pre-Bond Sean Connery. A greater live-action hit was made for the small screen, *Davy Crockett*, shown on the TV show *Disneyland*. Davy's coonskin caps sold like Mickey Mouse ears (which they predated by a year or so), and two cinema films followed.

As Walt became more involved with live action, TV and his ideas for a new kind of leisure park, he had less hands-on involvement in cartoon features. These included several forays into British literature: *Alice In Wonderland* (1951), *Peter Pan* (1953), *The Sword In The Stone* (1963) and perhaps the best, *One Hundred And One Dalmatians* (1961). This boasted a charming and witty script, down to a terrific cartoon-in-a-cartoon that the dogs watch on TV. The look of the film was modern

and graphically strong, with visible pencil-lines around the characters and backdrops. (The look was necessary because the film used a version of the Xerox process to animate six-and-a-half million Dalmatian spots.) *One Hundred And One Dalmatians* also had one of Disney's great comic villainesses, Cruella

## 1946'S SONG OF THE SOUTH MARKED ANOTHER SHIFT TOWARDS LIVE ACTION.

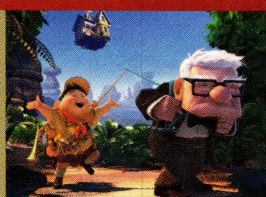
### DISNEY TIMELINE



2007  
ENCHANTED



2008  
WALL-E



2009  
UP



2010  
ALICE IN WONDERLAND



2010  
TOY STORY 3





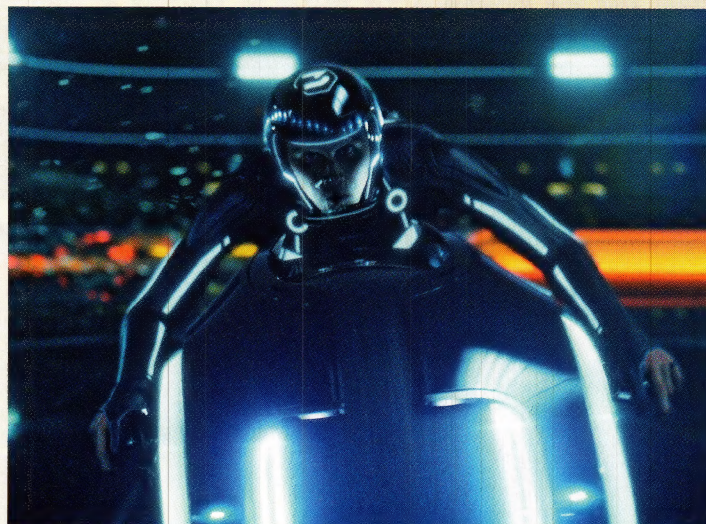
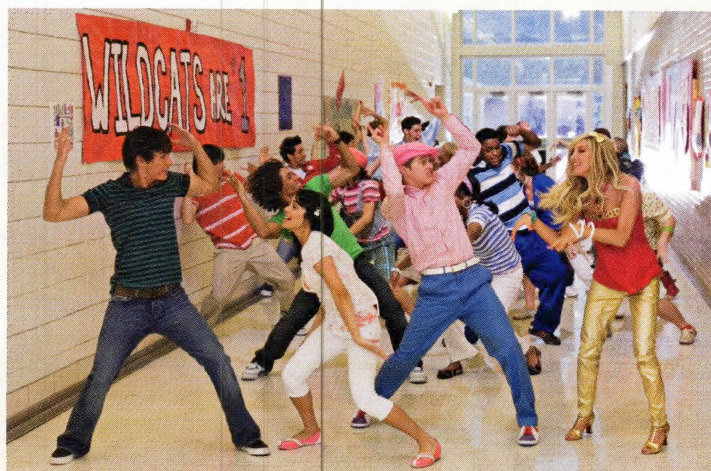
Above: A return to hand-drawn animation with *The Princess And The Frog*. Above right: 2010's 3D extravaganza, *Tron: Legacy*. Right: high-stakes adventure with *Prince Of Persia*. Bottom: tween favourite *High School Musical 2*.

De Vil, created by animator Marc Davis.

Davis had already drawn the straight villainess Maleficent in 1959's *Sleeping Beauty*, though another veteran, Ken Anderson, handled the monstrous dragon that she becomes in the finale. The film was one of Disney's most graphically ornate animations, inspired by medieval tapestries. It disappointed at the box office, though, and led to a moratorium on fairytale features until *The Little Mermaid* 30 years later.

One of Walt's last great hands-on features was *Mary Poppins* (1964). He'd been chasing the property since the 1940s, spending nearly a year just persuading Julie Andrews to take the title role. Karen Dotrice, who played the little Banks girl, described the enthused Walt as "like a big kid", and he still had a kid's imagination. For example, the film's *Jolly Holiday* number, written by the Sherman Brothers, had been planned for a quartet of waiters until Walt mused that waiters looked like penguins.

*Mary Poppins* was a roaring box-office success, though Walt discarded any idea of a sequel. To the end, he was making inspired judgment calls; for instance, it was his suggestion that Baloo in *The Jungle Book* should be voiced by Phil Harris, turning a good cartoon into a great one, truly one of



the studio's best-loved films. Walt, though, would not be at its premiere. In November 1966, he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Walt Disney died on December 15, a few days after his 65th birthday.

**T**HE NEXT TWO DECADES ARE USUALLY SEEN AS THE STUDIO'S YEARS OF DECLINE, EXCEPT FOR FILM LOVERS WHO HAPPENED TO GROW UP WITH THEM. IF YOU DID, YOU PROBABLY COUNTED HERBIE THE CHEEKY VOLKSWAGEN (INTRODUCED IN 1968'S HIT

*The Love Bug*) among your childhood mates, or *Pete's Dragon* (1977), or Todd and Copper in *The Fox And The Hound* (1981). In the decades after Walt, his company, no longer a simple studio, has become a vast business empire. And yet animation brought the Disney name back to prominence, with hits such as *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), co-produced with Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, and *Beauty And The Beast* (1991), the only cartoon ever to be nominated for a Best Picture Oscar. They were followed by *Aladdin* (1992) and the record-breaking *The Lion King* (1994).

As computer animation steadily became more important in these films — *Beauty And The Beast*'s 3-D ballroom, *Aladdin*'s lava pits, *The Lion King*'s wildebeest stampede — the studio investigated the possibility of an all-CGI feature, leading to a partnership with a young company called Pixar. The Disney Feature Animation department was intimately involved in *Toy Story*, whose director, John Lasseter, was himself an ex-Disney animator. Today he's the chief creative officer at both animation studios, developing projects such as the sequels to *Cars* and *Monsters, Inc.*

Disney has continued to evolve on the big screen. From its tween-pleasing *High School Musical*, Hannah Montana and Jonas Brothers films to its ability to craft big-budget blockbusters such as the *Pirates Of The Caribbean* franchise (the fourth instalment of which is due in 2011), *Prince Caspian*, *Prince Of Persia* and the upcoming *Tron: Legacy*, Disney even managed to squeeze in an old-fashioned romantic fairytale in *Enchanted*. And even though Pixar continues to astonish with its command of high-powered pixels — next up is *Cars 2*, directed by *Ratatouille* producer Brad Lewis — 2009's *The Princess And The Frog* is proof the Mouse House hasn't completely turned its back on traditional animation.

Anyone who doubted such a film could play successfully today should have cast his or her mind back 82 years, to a Broadway cinema and a nervy young man with a cartoon mouse. The viewers of that time came for bedlam and ultra-violence, yet stayed for cartoon mice, pigs and princesses. Walt was a man of many aphorisms, yet perhaps his most telling is the cheery note he sent to his brother in 1928. One can imagine it being spoken in a chirpy Mickey Mouse falsetto. "We can lick them all with quality!"

► **Dreams Come True: The Art Of Disney's Classic Fairytales** is showing at Melbourne's ACMI from November 18 to April 26, 2011.



# THE MAGIC OF DISNEY:



## UPDATING TO DISNEY BLU-RAY IS GREAT VALUE!

Each of the Blu-rays featured here comes with a **bonus DVD**, perfect for the kids to watch in their playroom or on those long drives.

Some packages also contain a second Blu-ray complete with **great bonus extras**, including brand new interactive content that will keep the kids (and adults!) entertained for hours.

And for anyone who doesn't yet have a Blu-ray player but is thinking of getting one for Christmas, **this is a great way to start your collection**. You can still enjoy the films on DVD for now, and then enjoy them all over again in dazzling high-def — **for no extra cost**. This really is the ultimate way to future proof your collection, and enjoy your favourite Disney films with all the family.

For more than six decades, Walt Disney has consistently produced some of the most visually breathtaking films of all time. Now, thanks to the sparkling clarity of Blu-ray, these films can be enjoyed in dazzling high definition...



### SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

A must-own for any collection, this 73 year classic has been restored with a beautiful hi-def treatment and stunning attention to detail.

**EXTRAS:** There are more than 40 featurettes spread across this sumptuous three-disc set, split into different departments, such as Story Room, Music Room, Art Department and so on. Add in a Walt Disney commentary, games and activities, deleted scenes and more, and this unmissable film has become even more of a must-have for all ages.



### PINOCCHIO

One of Disney's most beloved fairytales, this beautiful story about a woodcarver, Geppetto, building a marionette who's brought to life by a fairy will not only keep the family spellbound, but teach the young ones about the importance of being a good person and telling the truth.

**EXTRAS:** There's enough here to fill a dozen toyboxes! Deleted scenes, 55-minute making-of, featurettes on the impact of Pinocchio on toymaking and the room in which animators had to present their work to Walt Disney, trailers, galleries, puzzles and more!



### BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Featuring some of Disney's most memorable musical moments, this enchanting fairytale features some of the most breathtaking hand-drawn animation you'll ever see. No wonder it was the first animated film to receive a Best Picture Oscar nomination.

**EXTRAS:** As well as the extended edition you'll also get the original cut, with a storyreel P-I-P option, as well as a lengthy making-of, deleted scenes, a musical challenge game, a discussion of the music in the film and much, much more.



# GREAT FAMILY VALUE ON BLU-RAY



## THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG

A fond return to the classic animation of Disney's past, and a great twist on the "Frog Princess" fairytale, as a young girl, Tiana, kisses a frog prince who wants to be human again.

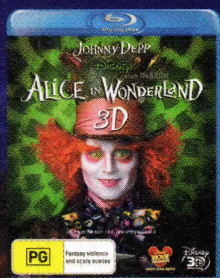
**EXTRAS:** In addition to a commentary, deleted scenes and a music video, there are six other featurettes that look at the production of the film, Disney's return to hand-drawn animation, the newest princess, Tiana, Disney's phenomenal legacy and the villain of the piece, Dr Facilier, as well as a gallery of princess portraits.



## PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

A rollicking epic starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Gemma Arterton, who together must stop a wicked Ben Kingsley from destroying the world by turning its inhabitants into demons. A fun, fantastic action film for all ages!

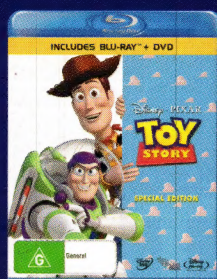
**EXTRAS:** A feature-length interactive feature allows you to see behind-the-scenes material and watch interviews with the actors while you're watching the film. There's also a deleted scene — you'll wonder how they could have cut it out!



## ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Tim Burton and Johnny Deep team up for an unforgettable reimagining of the Lewis Carroll classic. You can't help but be astonished by the breathtaking visuals and Burton's fantastically rich imagination.

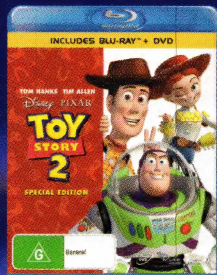
**EXTRAS:** Featurettes on the characters of Alice and The Mad Hatter, plus another on the green-screen and motion capture work in the film.



## TOY STORY

The first-ever CG animated feature length film set the standard for all those that followed. It introduced us not only to the wonders of Pixar, but to two of our very good friends, Woody and Buzz Lightyear. To infinity and beyond!

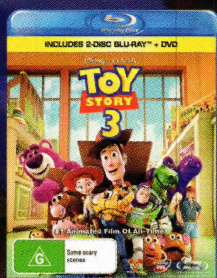
**EXTRAS:** An entertaining commentary along with deleted scenes, a fascinating featurette on the film's original (and abandoned) concept, and more featurettes covering everything from the animators to the production to the music and more, with added Pixar-animated short stories.



## TOY STORY 2

Buzz and the gang return in that rarest of films — a sequel that's just as good as the original! Here, our favourite spaceman Buzz has to rally the toy-troops to save Woody from a toy collector. As with each *Toy Story* film, it's an adventure you can watch over and over.

**EXTRAS:** A great commentary, entertaining making-of, profile piece on John Lasseter, bonus little stories animated by Pixar, featurettes on some of the animators, and much more.



## TOY STORY 3D (released Nov 17)

You'll laugh and there's a good chance you'll cry in this, one of the greatest threequels ever made. With Andy heading to college, the toys are meant to be packed in the attic, but instead get delivered to a daycare centre. Can Woody keep the gang together?

**EXTRAS:** Another great commentary, the *Day and Night* animated short, plus more than 30 other extras, from featurettes to trailers to galleries to making-ofs. Exhaustive and hugely entertaining.



# WIN!

By going to [www.empireonline.com.au](http://www.empireonline.com.au) and telling us in 25 words or less what your favourite Disney film is and why, you'll have the opportunity to win one of five prize packs containing each of these films, valued at \$430 each.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Competition ends at 23:59 AEST on 5/12/10. For full terms and conditions, see [www.empireonline.com.au](http://www.empireonline.com.au). Please see page 6 for our privacy notice. If you do not want your information provided to any organisation not associated with this competition, please indicate so on your entry.

